Metadata of the chapter that will be visualized online

Chapter Title	Learner Autonomy and Awareness Through Distance Collaborative Group Work in English for Academic Purposes	
Copyright Year	2016	
Copyright Holder	Springer International Publishing Switzerland	
Corresponding Author	Family Name	**Arnó-Macià** Q1
	Particle	
	Given Name	**Elisabet**
	Suffix	
	Division	
	Organization/University	Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya
	Address	Barcelona, Spain
	Email	elisabet.arno@upc.edu
Abstract	Learner autonomy has received central attention in language learning from multiple perspectives, as both a skill and an attitude of learners, who make decisions on and monitor their learning (e.g. Holec H, Autonomy in foreign language learning. Pergamon, Oxford, 1981 Little D, Learner autonomy. 1: definitions, issues and problems. Authentik, Dublin, 1991). A key notion is interdependence, based on collaboration and heightened awareness (Dam L, Learner autonomy 3: from theory to practice. Authentik, Dublin, 1995). In online environments, Ding (Theoretical and practical issues in the collaborative learner autonomy in a virtual self-access centre. In Holmberg B, Shelley M, White C (eds) Distance education and languages. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp 40–54, 2005) referred to 'collaborative autonomy', and Schwienhorst (Learner autonomy and CALL environments. Routledge, London, 2008) identified the principles of awareness, interaction, and experimentation. Q2 Q3	

AUTHOR QUERIES

Q1 Please confirm the presentation of the author name "Elisabet Arnó-Macià".

Q2 Please confirm the text for the abstract.

Q3 Abstract citations have been replaced with complete reference details. Please check.

Learner Autonomy and Awareness Through Distance Collaborative Group Work in English for Academic Purposes

AU1 **Elisabet Arnó-Macià**

AU2 **Abstract** Learner autonomy has received central attention in language learning from multiple perspectives, as both a skill and an attitude of learners, who make AU3 decisions on and monitor their learning (e.g. Holec H, Autonomy in foreign language learning. Pergamon, Oxford, 1981 Little D, Learner autonomy. 1: definitions, issues and problems. Authentik, Dublin, 1991). A key notion is interdependence, based on collaboration and heightened awareness (Dam L, Learner autonomy 3: from theory to practice. Authentik, Dublin, 1995). In online environments, Ding (Theoretical and practical issues in the collaborative learner autonomy in a virtual self-access centre. In Holmberg B, Shelley M, White C (eds) Distance education and languages. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp 40–54, 2005) referred to 'collaborative autonomy', and Schwienhorst (Learner autonomy and CALL environments. Routledge, London, 2008) identified the principles of awareness, interaction, and experimentation.

1 Introduction

AU4 Learner autonomy has received central attention in language learning from multiple perspectives, as both a skill and an attitude of learners, who make decisions on and monitor their learning (e.g. Holec 1981; Little 1991). A key notion is interdependence, based on collaboration and heightened awareness (Dam 1995). In online environments, Ding (2005) referred to 'collaborative autonomy', and Schwienhorst (2008) identified the principles of awareness, interaction, and experimentation.

Language and learner awareness are essential elements in autonomy. Awareness is understood as promoting learners' reflection, as a process of exploration and discovery starting from one's experience of language use (Carter 1990). An appropriate tool to develop language awareness is group work. Peer interaction promotes reflection on language and learning, whether in face-to-face (Kowal and Swain

E. Arnó-Macià (✉)
Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain
e-mail: elisabet.arno@upc.edu

R. Breeze, C. Sancho Guinda (eds.), *Essential Competencies for English-medium University Teaching*, Educational Linguistics 27,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-40956-6_13

1994; Sato and Ballinger 2012) or online situations (O'Rourke 2005), with the potential of text-based interaction for planning, reviewing, and reflection.

Peer interaction becomes a space for reflection, exploration, and development, in which learners can perform different actions (e.g. initiating interaction, assigning tasks and roles, evaluating) that in classroom situations would be directed by the teacher, deploying the social and cognitive strategies needed to manage and organize the task (Cots et al. 2007). Through the foreign language, it also provides a context for meaningful communication, integrating the responsibility involved in learner autonomy with target language use (Little 2007).

In the context of an online course focusing on learner autonomy and EAP, this chapter examines how students organize themselves in groups to carry out a collaborative language awareness task, using a forum and a wiki. Specifically, it focuses on the social and cognitive processes that students deploy during the activity, as well as those language topics that they reflect on.

2 Development of Learner Autonomy in an Online EAP Course

This study is set in an online EAP course, *English for Academic Purposes*: *learning English through the Web* (Barahona and Arnó 2001), designed to promote learner autonomy and EAP skills through the exploration and use of internet resources. It was part of the *Intercampus* programme (consisting of the joint offer of elective courses via the internet to students from all Catalan universities), and thus was open to students from different universities and degrees, and was not set at a specific level, but learners could adapt it to their needs. The course ran between 2001 and 2012 (the years of the *Intercampus* programme). The course and its approach to autonomy are described in Arnó et al. (2003) and Soler et al. (2005), together with an analysis of students' autonomous behaviour in the development of individual tasks and participation in classroom debates. This course was designed in such a way that it could be adapted to students with different levels of English and different disciplines, offering a variety of learning routes through flexible materials. With explicit instructions and study guides, students could choose the activities that they wanted to work on (e.g. focusing on certain skills or language topics, or applying general EAP tasks to relevant discipline-specific texts).

The course consisted of practical activities and discussions on language and academic topics. At the end of each module there was a tangible task related to EAP and autonomy (e.g. a classification and evaluation of web resources or a self-study plan for language learning). The final tasks for the first three modules were individual, while those in Modules 4 and 5 were collaborative: a classification and analysis of computer-mediated communication resources for language learning and the design of a language learning activity for fellow students. Group tasks involved online collaboration through Moodle, and students were responsible for the activity.

This study analyses the last course task, "*Module 5. Designing a language activity*".

The rationale for group tasks, considering that they were entirely online, included the creation of a wiki for the co-construction of the text, in combination with a forum for task management and discussion. This research looks at the wiki and forum contributions for one of the collaborative tasks. Wikis have been identified as appropriate spaces for creation and collaboration within new university paradigms of active, autonomous learning, to enhance social and instrumental competences (Mancho et al. 2009). The potential of wikis for student authorship and active involvement has led to the creation of English for Specific Purposes courses that make use of them (e.g. Rodríguez-Arancón and Calle-Martínez 2014). Wikis can raise students' awareness of key issues in academic writing (Kuteeva 2011). They are flexible spaces that students can adapt to their own needs, and they contribute to the development of a collaborative attitude (Kessler 2009; Kessler and Bikowski 2010).

AU6

3 The Study

3.1 Setting and Participants

This study is based on one of the collaborative tasks done in the course English *for Academic Purposes*: *Learning English through the Web* during the academic year 2010–2011. It was the last activity in the course (*Module 5*, *Activity 14*, *Designing a language learning task*), in which learners were given a "teacher" role. They had to choose an authentic internet resource not intended for language learning, and design a learning activity based on it. Since it was the second collaborative activity, students were expected to have some experience in this type of task.

The course instructors formed the virtual groups by randomly assigning students, who came from different universities and disciplines and therefore had not met before, so the total of 40 students enrolled in the course were assigned to eight groups of five students each. They were expected to work collaboratively, and entirely online, on the collaborative task in Module 4. The same groups were kept for the collaborative task in Module 5. Therefore, students were expected to learn to work together at a distance. Group activities were based on student interaction alone, and the instructors only participated in activity design and giving instructions. A general guiding message was posted on Moodle and instructors were available for consultation by email, but did not participate in the group discussions, as the aim of the activities (and of the course itself) was that students would be responsible for organizing and managing their learning. On the other hand, the activities and their accompanying study guides had been carefully designed in order to facilitate and support learning. Besides, as both these collaborative activities were end-of-module activities, they drew on previous activities that had already appeared in the module.

Data were collected at the end of the fall term of 2010–2011 (January 2011), by the author (one of the instructors). A general message was sent to students explaining the purposes of the study (guaranteeing confidentiality), and asking for permission to collect the data from the wiki and forum.

3.2 Aims

This study takes a qualitative approach to analysing students' independent work on a collaborative language awareness task, which involves the collaborative design of a language learning activity. Specifically, this study aims at finding out how students collaborate at a distance, using a forum and a wiki, to reflect on language and learning. Thus, attention is paid to students' focus on topics related to language and learning as each group organizes and manages the task through forum discussions and wiki edits, in the process of co-constructing the task (making their own contributions and reacting to those of others).

Specifically, the research questions posed for this study are the following:

1. How do students organize and manage the task? Do they collaborate through online interaction? Do they use a combination of wiki and forum to accomplish the task?
2. What cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies do students use to accomplish the task?
3. Is there reflection on language and learning? What do students reflect on and how do they carry out this reflective activity?

Given that this study focuses on students' interaction over a learning activity in the online classroom, it was considered that an appropriate framework of analysis was Garrison et al.'s (2000, 2001) model of the online 'community of inquiry', which is based on the interrelation of the social, cognitive and teaching dimensions of 'presence', which should lead to meaningful learning. Social presence is of crucial importance in online learning, as it is through written interaction that participants have to make themselves 'present', i.e. 'project their personal characteristics into the community, thereby presenting themselves to other participants as "real people"' (Garrison et al. 2000, 89). Social presence, i.e. how participants express themselves, collaborate and create group cohesion, supports the central element of cognitive presence, which refers to how participants engage with the materials (and with the ideas presented by others) for the appropriation of meaning. As these authors point out, 'cognitive presence is a vital element in critical thinking, a process and outcome that is frequently presented as the ostensible goal of all higher education' (Garrison et al. 2000, 89). Through discussion, participants engage in the process of critical thinking, which thus relies on the relationship between cognitive and social activity (Garrison et al. 2001). This process takes place in four stages, so that after a 'triggering event', or identifying the problem, there is a stage of exploration, which connects individual and shared views, followed by integration (assess-

ing and connecting ideas, constructing meaning), which leads to task resolution. The third dimension in the model, teaching presence, includes the functions of designing and organizing the activity (often associated with the teacher role) and facilitating learning, i.e. 'to support and enhance social and cognitive presence for the purpose of realizing educational outcomes' (Garrison et al. 2000: 90).

The community of inquiry model has been widely used to research interaction in online classes, looking at how students create a social space at a distance, which allows them to solve the task at hand through text-based interaction (see e.g. the review in Swan and Ice 2010). In this study, the community of inquiry framework seems suited to the analysis of autonomous groups that are based exclusively on asynchronous text-based communication. Another particular feature that distinguishes the setting studied in this chapter from other online classes is that we are dealing with peer interaction and the communities are, in fact, groups of students who are required to collaborate to organize themselves and complete the task. Therefore, students in this situation are required to show great levels of autonomy and awareness, that is, to apply their metacognitive skills. To succeed in the task, students have to organize, plan and monitor their learning, using metacognitive skills, which are crucial for distance language learners (Hurd 2000; Soler et al. 2005). In a sense, metacognition can also be related to the teacher presence (Garrison and Arbaugh 2007), so that by gaining greater awareness, students can be pushed towards higher-order thinking. Metacognition is inextricably linked to autonomy and awareness, whereby students reflect on their learning and make decisions, even more so in a group work situation, as they are fully responsible for the process and outcomes of solving the task. Precisely because of this peer interaction context, the teacher presence within the framework of the community of inquiry is less applicable, although some of the facilitating functions can be performed by fellow learners, like encouraging others or assessing ideas presented (Garrison et al. 2000). In this study, the teaching presence is also associated with peers, as students collaborated with their partners using the instructions and prompts given by lecturers.

A similar study of online peer interaction applying Garrison et al.'s (2001) model is that by Arnold and Ducate (2006), who also looked at the social and cognitive dimensions of collaborative work. As in the present study, Arnold and Ducate's teachers did not participate in the discussions, so that the teaching presence domain was not relevant except for the category of 'instructional management' (planning activities, etc.). Arnold and Ducate thus studied the transcripts produced by students in group discussions (bulletin board discussions), including both cognitive and social activity. The transcriptions were coded by using categories derived from Garrison et al.'s (2000, 2001) indicators of social and cognitive presence. For example, social presence can be indicated by (i) emotional expression, further subdivided into humor and self-disclosure (i.e. 'sharing of feelings/attitudes/experiences/interests'), (ii) open communication, further subdivided into mutual awareness (i.e. reacting to other students' messages) and 'recognition of each other's contributions' (e.g. encouraging others, expressing agreement), and (iii) group cohesion (i.e. keeping the group together, encouraging participation and collaboration). On the other hand, cognitive presence in students' contributions can be indicated by means

of the recognition of a problem (triggering event), information exchange or discussion of ambiguities (corresponding to the exploration stage), connecting ideas or creating a solution (integration), and applying new ideas (resolution). Regarding the teaching presence, although it is not directly relevant to this study in terms of teacher intervention, the indicators merit attention on the grounds that teacher presence can be linked to metacognition (as mentioned before), given that students have to organize, plan and direct their own learning. Thus, categories under teaching presence, such as 'instructional management' (which includes 'defining and initating discussion topics'), 'building understanding' (with 'sharing personal information') or 'direct instruction' (with 'focusing discussion') are worth considering, since these actions may be undertaken by students as they take responsibility for managing the task.

3.3 Analysis

Combining the records of forum and wiki activities, this study aims at capturing the breadth of students' online collaborative work on a task on language and learning. The spaces used for collaboration were a wiki, the space that students edited collaboratively to complete the task, and the forum, the space that they used to communicate with fellow group members. The analysis of the wiki can offer insights into how students collaborate and the richness of such collaboration. Information about the process of task completion can be gathered from the number of versions of the wiki and the variety of participants that contributed to it, especially looking at how students inserted their contributions by building on other students' work.

In the forum, each group created a debate, initiated by one of the group members, to discuss guidelines, task management, and organization. Like the wiki, the forum was entirely managed by students. Instructors' participation included only a general message opening the forum and inviting the groups to start work.

The process of data analysis started with a general overview of the forum messages and wiki versions, in order to capture the extent of the collaboration and to have a starting point for analysing the social and cognitive/metacognitive processes that each group deployed to solve the task. Then the focus of analysis moved to the spaces for each of the groups, the forum and the wiki. For the forum, the messages were analysed to identify those segments of text in which students contributed to the activity through social or cognitive/metacognitive processes. Each segment was coded by the researcher by assigning it a function in terms of the social dimension when it came to sharing ideas or for affective factors (for example, asking for consensus or praising others) or cognitive/metacognitive when it came to making sense of the ideas proposed or organizing the activity (e.g. analysing elements of the activity and proposing a solution, or planning steps to be taken towards solving the task). The point of departure for analysis was the general framework in Garrison et al. (2000, 2001) and Arnold and Ducate (2006). Like the latter study, teacher presence was not considered, since we were dealing with student-student interaction. The

analysis of the messages aimed at identifying the different steps (i.e. initiation, exploration, resolution, etc.) that students followed to solve the task, and the more in-depth analysis of the segments yielded specific indicators that showed the social and cognitive/metacognitive processes used. This being an exploratory study, the process of analysis was mainly inductive, that is deriving specific categories from the data (though inspired by the general categories in the online community of inquiry framework). Then, following a recursive inductive-deductive process, the different segments were coded according to whether they were indicators of a certain social or cognitive/metacognitive process.

On the other hand, the analysis of the wikis focused on the different versions that students produced, in order to find out how students co-constructed the task, making their own contributions and modifying previous ones (made either by themselves or by others). Like the forum, the analysis started with a general overview of student participation, looking at the number of students who contributed to the group wiki and the number of wiki versions produced. These numbers were an indication of greater collaboration (i.e. the higher number of students contributing to the wiki) and of depth of the activity (i.e. a higher number of versions). Since the wiki analysis was aimed at finding out the extent to which students showed evidence of reflection on language (either explicitly or implicitly) in the actual development of the activity, it focused on the detail of the different versions (retrievable from the wiki history page) scrutinising what changes were made that indicated metalinguistic reflection. For this in-depth analysis, the wikis selected for analysis were those that showed greater activity, either because there were more students participating or because more versions were produced. Therefore, a total of three group wikis were analysed, comparing subsequent versions to identify those edits that focused on language either because there were corrections (implicit reflection) or because students explicitly talked about language.

3.3.1 General Overview of Task Completion

Students' use of the wiki and forum to complete the task is summarized in Table 1. Each group had five members and the first step of the analysis involved counting the wiki versions, considering that they reflect the progress of task completion, and the number of forum posts, showing students' participation in the discussion. 'Activity authorship' indicates the number of students participating in each group wiki. Apart from the dropout rate that may appear in online contexts, the end-of-term dates of the activity (December-January) were not the best timing, since the activity expanded over holidays and different exam periods at the students' universities. This situation may explain why some teams only had a few students really involved in the activity (Groups A, B and G, with only two students doing the task). In the case of group C, the group did not do the activity. One student posted a message to the forum (similar to how the interaction started with the other groups), but he did not receive a reply, which is why the activity was not completed. It may have been the case that the rest of the students in the group had either dropped out of the course

t1.1 **Table 1** Participation in forum and wiki

t1.2 t1.3 Groups and members	Wiki versions	Forum posts	Activity authorship
t1.4 Group A t1.5 5	11	10	2
t1.6 Group B t1.7 5	14	9	2
t1.8 Group C t1.9 5	1	1 (inviting students to participate, no reply)	1, task not done
t1.10 Group D t1.11 5	14	16	5
t1.12 Group E t1.13 5	16	45	3
t1.14 Group F t1.15 5	27	49	3
t1.16 Group G t1.17 5	7	12	2
t1.18 Group H t1.19 5	26	7	4

278 or been involved in exams and thus disregarded this particular activity (or a combi-
279 nation of both). In terms of assessment, all course activities were assessed, but one
280 student could miss a particular activity (and obviously get no mark for it, thus get-
281 ting a lower overall course mark) and still pass the course. Therefore, this being the
282 last activity in an elective online course, it is not unlikely that some students decided
283 to put their effort into the exams and assignments for other subjects and skip this
284 task, which may explain the low participation in some cases (and no participation in
285 group C). All in all, given the large number of groups and students, we can see that
286 the response rate is quite high.

287 As can be seen from the table, the degree of activity varied across groups, both
288 in number of wiki versions and amount of student participation in forum. In particu-
289 lar, this small exploratory study looks at both forum interaction and wiki versions to
290 identify the cognitive, metacognitive and social processes that students used to
291 solve the task collaboratively.

292 3.3.2 Forum Analysis

293 The analysis of the forum shows how students solved the task through peer interac-
294 tion. As they were responsible for the task, they could adapt the space to their own
295 needs and all participants had equal opportunities to initiate topics and contribute to
296 the discussion. One group member initiated the debate, starting the process. Below
297 are two different initiation messages. In the first one, the student posted task instruc-
298 tions, asking for reassurance that fellow learners are 'there' (in the virtual space),
299 and inviting contributions.

> Hey!
> Who is from this group???
> We should start the activity! For doing it, we have to follow these steps:
> (…)
> Does anyone have any useful resource? (B)

The second message gives evidence of work done – choosing a resource – and invites action from other members, either examining the proposed resource or suggesting other materials. In both cases, the 'triggering event' is the task instructions.

> Hi,
> I have been looking for some interesting resources and I have found that the web of ABC or BBC could be interesting for the activity because you have too many ways to learn English while using these websites.
> Take a look at them and if you think that they meet the requirements of the activity we can start working on it.
> If not, you can add more interesting resources and we decide which is the best. (G)

All but one of the initiation messages received responses, and there was a single debate for each group, which means that all group members followed the same thread. They stayed on track, and all contributions related to the task, indicating a collaborative attitude. Task discussions followed these general phases:

- Initiation: proposing materials or referring to instructions.
- Contributions to the task.
- Occasional asides (checking deadlines for other activities, social references to holidays or exams).
- Completion of activity.
- Follow-up (second part of the activity, individual, which involved sharing activities at class level).

Although the wiki was intended for task development and the forum for discussion, sometimes students included discussions in the wiki and activities in the forum. Other students alerted them, and redirected action:

> Hello! I've seen that X posted her proposal on the Wiki, but I think we should discuss that here in the forum, because here we can send our answers without editing the original post. I paste here X's contribution (I hope you don't mind, X [smiley]) (A)

Forum messages reflect the social and cognitive processes used to complete the task – thus showing the underlying rationale and decisions – beyond the process of co-construction that can be observed through wiki edits. Students build on own and others' contributions, with reflections that move between individual and shared spaces. Accordingly, analysis of forum messages pays attention to social, cognitive, and metacognitive processes. Categories were derived from the data through an inductive process, taking as a point of departure the frameworks by Garrison et al. (2001) and Arnold and Ducate (2006). Such (meta)cognitive and social processes were intertwined, which sometimes made it difficult to assign a single category to a stretch of discourse. As an initial exploratory study, this aims at identifying what processes students use to build a common socio-discursive space to solve the task. Tables 2 and 3 show the social, cognitive, and metacognitive processes identified.

AU2 **Table 2** Summary of social processes

Social processes	
Praising	Hi again, I think X that you've done a really good job and that this video is a very good activity for English learners!-G
	X I have seen your wiki and i love it, it is very clear and organized-D
Asking for consensus	I'm doing now another activity, so if you agree, I will ask you later what do you think about it-G
Expressing agreement	I agree with you X and I prefer "Improving your speaking skills"-D
Apologising and reacting to previous students' contributions	I'm sorry X I didn't have internet yesterday and I couldn't connect but I've read the information that you have written about TATE museum and it sounds good-F
Social, community, personal touch	Merry Christmas and a Happy new Year!!! –F
	Kisses!
	(LAUGHTER), JAJAJA
Complaining about other students' lack of participation	The deadline is coming, we need the contributions of the other members of the group! everybody is in exams period but this is not an excuse-D

The tables above show the wide range of processes that students engage in to solve the task. They take an active role in monitoring the activity, derived from their sense of responsibility. For example, they 'steer the activity', if they see that it is not going in the right direction. The forum is used together with the wiki – with explicit references to it – so as to move the task forward through a variety of cognitive processes. Some of them, like 'analysing/evaluating resources', appear to derive from the task (starting with the selection of a resource). These (meta)cognitive processes cannot be separated from the interactional processes through which students co-construct meaning, like announcing an action, eliciting reactions, or reacting to previous contributions. The following extract is the reelaboration of the student's own contribution, specifically a self-correction. It is a rare category, since this process goes implicit with wiki edits, but by using the forum, this student is sharing her thinking process.

> I've been thinking in my proposal and I would like to do some changes. Instead of recording and listening ourselves, maybe we can practice reading and writing because we don't have the resources to record, and the final step of this task is doing another task designed by another group… so, nobody could do our task… I've thought we can propose that each student chose 2 news and mixed them like if they were only one. Then the student should post his/her writing and the rest should discover which news did he/she use. What do you think?-A

Participants appear to be collaborative, with references to other students' work, which indicates their reliance on social processes, like praising other contributions, asking for and expressing agreement, mitigating one's contribution ('if you agree', 'you can change it'). Cognitive and social processes are highly interrelated, as collaboration is mainly a social activity – for example, suggesting contents and asking for consensus. Some social messages (not directly related to the task) contribute to creating a sense of community, of solidarity among peers (references to holidays or

Table 3 Summary of (meta)cognitive processes

Cognitive and metacognitive processes	
Analysing/evaluating resources	It's in the web of national geographic and on it there's a lot of activities to do and a lot of interesting articles. There's also educators resources and one of them is for English learning language where combines a communicative approach to learning English with National Geographic images, video and content-F
References to work done on wiki	I have added the list of the language aspects that we can work on this topic. If you want you can add or modify the information-H
Suggesting contents	As a previous knowledge we can add basic knowledge about internet communication by web cam? Or with social networks?-D
Expressing judgements	I think that blue zones can be very interesting but it is a very specific resource because there you can only learn about this theme. I have chosen BBC's website because you can find different kind of themes. For example if you explore the web you can read the latest news, you can connect to all BBC's tv channels and you can also learn english with its-H
Reelaborating one's or others' contributions	The rest of ideas that you posted in the forum before I have to say that I completely agree with you so I'll think about them and how to post them in the wiki-D
Announcing action	I agree with the topic, I'm going to search more information and complete the steps-H
Asking for evaluation of work done	I don't know if this is ok, because of that I haven't continued. If you see errors correct them! I'm waiting for your responses! (*referring to a version attached to a forum message*, *not wiki*)-F
Analysing and inviting reaction	I've been thinking about step 4… what type of exercise you do prefer to do?-F
Steering activity	Hi girls! I've been reading your notes and I think that they're good. But I've read the teachers instructions too and they said this…F

exams). Students pay attention to politeness, with face-saving strategies (and hardly any face-threats), like in the following disagreement, which is mitigated.

> I find both proposals great, but perhaps could be more interesting focus in one topic, like blue zones, with different sources, than focus in one source, like BBC web, with a lot of topics, because we can be more specific with the objectives of the activity. Besides, in the BBC web there is a lot of material to learn English and if I'm not wrong, the exercise ask to use resources which aren't designed to learn English-H

3.3.3 Wiki Analysis

While the forum shows the processes for task completion, the wiki is the space for collaborative work. Each wiki started as a blank page for students to use and adapt. Work on the wiki can be traced through the history page, which shows the number

of versions and author of each. A particular version can be retrieved with a click to see the changes made, with additions and deletions marked with a + and – respectively.

From the previous general overview, attention is paid to specific wiki edits, in particular, to those that indicate some kind of reflection, usually implicit, rather than mere text formatting. This edit, for example, of a previous version by the same student, indicates a metalinguistic activity of self-correction, focusing on spelling.

> –Learn more about pronuntiation and expand your vocabulary and coloquial expresions.
> +Learn more about pronunciation and expand your vocabulary and colloquial expressions.

Therefore, wiki analysis focuses on contributions that indicate students' reflection – although a certain focus on language and learning could be expected given the metalinguistic nature of the task. The wiki data analysed was narrowed down to the three groups (D, F, and H) that showed greater activity, as shown in Table 1 above. Attention was paid to the topics that students focused on and to collaborative task completion. As in the case of the forum, the written record on the wiki revealed the process of co-construction of the text through students' use of a variety of cognitive and metacognitive processes.

Group D progressed on the wiki as participants discussed the task in the forum. Sixteen wiki versions were produced, with the participation of all five students, although one made substantial contributions, and the rest made minor changes. They decided to focus their task on speaking and intercultural skills. They start the wiki with some 'forum-like' messages, organizing the task, until one participant notes that the discussion should take place in the forum.

> Hello, I am X. I agree working with Skype, because although it is a communication tool between friends and relatives, it could be a great experience to further use it in order to develop speaking fluency. So then, we should complete the following steps…
> I'm with you girls skype it is a good way to learn english
> I think we should talk about these points on the forum and write here only our work.

This forum-like discussion then changes into a brainstorming of ideas to include in the activity, until one group member suggests organizing the information according to the template, as a comment to a previous contribution (in bold below, different color in the original). These contributions show students' awareness of task requirements and the ability to monitor each other's activity.

> Dating with your skype friend some days a week at the same time, speak about how you have done in that day, speak about topic you can watch the news and talk about them. (**this I think that should go to the table in tasks**)

They co-construct the wiki dialogically, including the draft contents – based on forum discussion – which they develop according to the template. These edits exemplify such expansions, in which students add a learning objective and an expected outcome.

> +Not feel ashamed to speak in English.
> +This activity will help you to improve your speech and vocabulary in English by making new friends and having fun

As they work through the task, they focus mainly on content, although there is some focus on form through self-/other-corrections and reformulations:

(Earlier version)	(Edited version)
Improve listening as you are having a conversation	Improve listening as you are having a conversation with another person
Meet people of other countries	Meet people of other countries which allows you to be familiar with other cultures and religions
Lose the shame of speaking English	Not feel ashamed to speak in English

Group F also use early versions of the wiki for brainstorming contents, and they provide a detailed list of language skills and strategies, to be applied to a general resource (BBC).

- Grammar (tenses, reported speech, conditionals, articles, etc.)
- Vocabulary (vocabulary from the news)
- Pronunciation (to learn about pronunciation, to pronounce the sounds of English, to practice with quizzes, etc.)
- Spelling (different kinds of activities, for instance, doubling final consonants)
- Punctuation (commas, colon, semi-colon, etc.)
- Reading (tips for reading and readings about different topics)
- Listening (tips for listening and listenings about varied topics)
- Writing (tips for writing and writings about different topics)
- Speaking (tips for speaking and differents kinds of speaking practice)

The resource we have chosen is http://www.bbc.co.uk/.
Writing: you can post in Students Blog (on BBC learning English)
AU8 I think that you don't practice speaking skills in this page, well at least I don't find anything)
I agree with the lists you have posted. But I don't know what else we could add. I don't know how to practice speaking skills, too. Also, I can't find the activities designed to practice pronunciation.
Please, show us how to find these sections and, in my opinion, we should elaborate the final list.

These early exchanges (which also look like forum messages) are accompanied by active discussions and exchange of attached documents in the forum. It is then mainly one student who puts the information into the template.

On the other hand, students in H start working on the wiki by following the template. A student develops a fairly detailed proposal, "Blue Zones", through 13 versions – giving a detailed description of it. This work on wiki is parallel to a lively forum debate (between "blue zones" and "BBC website"). In the following wiki version, another student makes a succinct proposal of an alternative activity (based on BBC), and suggests that the rest of the points can be completed if the new proposal is accepted. She refers to forum for further details, thus showing the interrelation between both tools.

+ [STUDENT'S NAME] Resource BBC

1. Introduction

This resource offers to the learner different kinds of knowledge because you can read about all the news, you can read about culture, entertainment, science and you can also learn

English and other languages. So this resource can be useful if everyday you explore the web during a few minutes, because you will find all about the actuality in one website.

2. Specific objectives
3. Previous knowledge
4. Related activities
5. Expected results

Summary

If finally we choose bbc as a good resource we can complete the rest of the points. (READ THE FORUM)

Corrections and reformulations include changing personal references to impersonal/collective ones, so that a draft individual exploration – with personal reflections that justify the ideas submitted – becomes an impersonal, more finalized version. While attention is paid to the tone of the text, errors go uncorrected.

–I study nursery, so the target of my career is make people live healthy. I thought that the information given in this interview would be very interesting; so that, I have chosen for the activity fourteenth a kind of report or task writing on the Blue Zones on Earth. Will see that the first step for health is having good habits

+We thought that the information given in this interview would be very interesting; so that, we have chosen for the activity fourteenth a kind of report or task writing on the Blue Zones on Earth. Will see that the first step for health is having good habits

After having worked on the contents, students focus on language learning, brainstorming ideas (and web resources) for their activity.

What are the language aspects that we can work on this resource?

Grammar (learning about phrasal verbs, verb tenses, learning about the word order, questions…) You can see it in this website http://www.bluezones.com/about/

Vocabulary (with this topic you can learn new vocabulary).

Pronunciation (with these listenings http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91285403, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zp0lguR6z2A, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W92F-iTImG4&feature=related, you can learn about pronunciation in English).

(…)

This brief picture of wiki activity shows how through the interrelation of wiki and forum, students develop the task. Taking different approaches, the groups collaborate on their wiki as they reflect on language and learning (focusing on topics like learning strategies, skills, practising different language areas, etc.), which, after all, constitute the contents of the task given. Going over different versions of the text (both their own and those of others) gives them the opportunity to modulate it for coherence, tone, and accuracy, which indicates a certain reflective activity, albeit implicitly.

4 Discussion and Conclusions

The analysis of the wikis and forums shows that students are able to organize and manage their work and that they use both tools in an interrelated manner. They are committed to the task and participate in lively forum discussions, bringing and

developing ideas that are then posted and co-constructed through the wiki. As part of a course focusing on learner autonomy, such collaborative tasks provide a space for students to take responsibility for their own learning and to obtain tangible results. More specifically, and going back to the research questions:

1. How do students organize and manage the task? Do they collaborate through online interaction? Do they use a combination of wiki and forum to accomplish the task?

Students take responsibility for the task and adopt a collaborative attitude, although they take different approaches to the task. This collaborative attitude is shown through the tone of their messages, solidarity among peers, and the use of face-saving strategies (acknowledging others' work or presenting their contributions for approval). Since all communication is written, special attention is paid to the tone of the messages. Online interaction offers students the opportunity to practise politeness through real on-task communication in the foreign language.

Students use a combination of forum and wiki, showing awareness of task requirements. They monitor each other and point out if somebody does not comply. Both wiki and forum are complementary, allowing students to express and share their thoughts through the forum, which allows them to reach consensus on the work done, which they elaborate on to feed the co-construction of the wiki. Since all the work is done online, all the processes are usually explicit, as for example, when a student contributes to the wiki and sends a message to forum explaining it.

2. What cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies do students use to accomplish the task?

Especially through forum discussion, students deploy a wide range of strategies to develop the task, although some of them (analysing/evaluating resources, making judgements) seem to derive from the objectives of the activity. Students build up a social space, creating a sense of community at a distance. Social activity (including students in the group, praising others, etc.) is interrelated with action. In their messages, students connect their contributions to others', elicit responses, or indicate further steps. It is a reflective activity through which students link individual and shared views.

Analysis of the wiki shows that students integrate the contents discussed in the forum to construct the task. Wiki edits implicitly indicate metalinguistic reflection, especially showing awareness of task requirements.

3. Is there reflection on language and learning? What do students reflect on and how do they carry out this reflective activity?

As it is a metalinguistic task, it is not surprising to find explicit reflection on language and learning. Especially through the wiki, students focus mainly on content, although this is related to language and learning, in a process that starts with brainstorming or a discussion of the internet resources that will form the basis for designing their activity, accompanied by communication on the forum. As it is an open task, students can choose what to focus on. Some of those contents include: speaking skills or thorough inventories of language areas (grammar, vocabulary,

spelling, pronunciation). As they co-construct the task, students then elaborate on such language-related contents, but errors sometimes go uncorrected. Students strive for fluency (rather than accuracy) and communication, especially in the forum, but wiki edits indicate a certain awareness of writing issues, like expressing and connecting ideas, tone, or spelling.

This study has provided a snapshot of online collaborative work, through a combination of student-managed wikis and forums. Such tools allow participants to organize the task and be creative in the process of solving it. Through discussion and collaborative writing, students create an online community through which they co-construct their texts.

By observing student interaction in different types of online language learning contexts, we can derive implications for teachers to design materials and provide support for students to develop autonomy and awareness. The categories identified in this exploratory study can serve as a point of departure for refinement or validation through their application to other sets of data.

Within an online EAP course, this collaborative task was designed for students to be both authors and authority, so that they could adopt a variety of roles and undertake actions that would be difficult to find in teacher-guided situations. Online interaction over a purposeful task also provides the opportunity for real communication practice in the foreign language as, after all, today's university students need to learn to collaborate at a distance. Asynchronous communication tools allow them to collaborate without having to meet at certain times, while the use of text-based messages allows them to plan their responses, and read other contributions in detail, thus facilitating reflection and elaboration.

Questions for Reflection on Future Teaching Practice

1. What strategies can teachers use to encourage learner autonomy and reflection through student-student online interaction?
2. This study has focused on an activity done in a course that is entirely online, but how can a similar activity be integrated in a classroom-based course, so that students' autonomous online activity can be related to (and reinforced by) discussion with the teacher?
3. This study has analysed the use of a wiki and forum for a group task for developing learner autonomy and language skills, but how could this type of activity be done using other ICT tools (e.g. facebook, whatsapp, blogs, etc.)? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of each tool?

References

Arnó, E., Rueda, C., Soler, A., & Barahona, C. (2003). Developing learner autonomy through a virtual EAP course at university. *BELLS: Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies, 12*. Retrieved from http://www.publicacions.ub.es/revistes/bells12/

Arnold, N., & Ducate, L. (2006). Future foreign language teachers' social and cognitive collaboration in an online environment. *Language Learning & Technology, 10*(1), 42–66. Retrieved from http://llt.msu.edu/vol10num1/arnoldducate/default.html

Carter, R. A. (Ed.). (1990). *Knowledge about language and the curriculum*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Cots, J. M., Armengol, L., Arnó, E., Irún, M., & Llurda, E. (2007). *La conciencia lingüística en la enseñanza de lenguas*. Barcelona: Graó.

Dam, L. (1995). *Learner autonomy 3: From theory to practice*. Dublin: Authentik.

Ding, A. (2005). Theoretical and practical issues in the collaborative learner autonomy in a virtual self-access centre. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages* (pp. 40–54). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Garrison, D. R., & Arbaugh, J. B. (2007). Researching the community of inquiry framework: Review, issues, and future directions. *Internet and Higher Education, 10*, 157–172.

Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *Internet and Higher Education, 2*(2–3), 87–105.

Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2001). Critical thinking and computer conferencing: A model and tool to assess cognitive presence. *American Journal of Distance Education, 15*(1), 7–23.

Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy in foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Hurd, S. (2000). Distance language learners and learner support: Beliefs, difficulties and use of strategies. In M. Victori (Ed.), *Autonomy in second language learning. Links & letters* (Vol. 7, pp. 61–80). Bellaterra: UAB, Servei de Publicacions.

Kessler, G. (2009). Student-initiated attention to form in wiki-based collaborative writing. *Language Learning & Technology, 13*, 79–95.

Kessler, G., & Bikowski, D. (2010). Developing collaborative autonomous learning abilities in computer mediated language learning: Attention to meaning among students in wiki space. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 23*, 41–58.

Kowal, M., & Swain, M. (1994). Using collaborative language production tasks to promote students' language awareness. *Language Awareness, 3*(2), 73–93.

Kuteeva, M. (2011). Wikis and academic writing: Changing the writer-reader relationship. *English for Specific Purposes, 30*, 44–57.

Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy. 1: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.

Little, D. (2007). Language learner autonomy: Some fundamental considerations revisited. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 1*(1), 14–29.

Mancho, G., Porto, M. D., & Valero, C. (2009). Wikis e Innovación Docente. *RED – Revista de Educación a Distancia. Número monográfico X.* (Número especial dedicado a Wiki y educación superior en España (en coedición con Red-U).). Retrieved from http://www.um.es/ead/red/M10/

O'Rourke, B. (2005). Form-focused interaction in online tandem learning. *CALICO Journal, 22*(3), 433–466.

Rodríguez-Arancón, P., & Calle-Martínez, C. (2014). A practical application of wikis for learning business English as a second language. In E. Bárcena, T. Read, & J. Arús (Eds.), *Languages for specific purposes in the digital era*. New York: Springer.

Sato, M., & Ballinger, S. (2012). Raising language awareness in peer interaction: A cross-context, cross-method examination. *Language Awareness, 2*(1–2), 157–179.

Schwienhorst, K. (2008). *Learner autonomy and CALL environments*. London: Routledge.

Soler, A., Rueda, C., & Arnó, E. (2005). Students' profile as autonomous learners in an Internet-based EAP course. *Ibérica, 9*, 53–78.

Swan, K., & Ice, P. (2010). The community of inquiry framework ten years later: Introduction to the special issue. *Internet and Higher Education, 13*(1–2), 1–4.

Author Queries

Chapter No.: 13 0002770968

Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Please confirm the presentation of the author name "Elisabet Arnó-Macià".	
AU2	Please confirm the text for the abstract.	
AU3	Abstract citations have been replaced with complete reference details. Please check.	
AU4	Please provide keywords.	
AU5	Barahona and Arnó (2001) is cited in text but not given in the reference list. Please provide details in the list or delete the citation from the text.	
AU6	The citation Rodríguez-Arancón (2014) has been changed to Rodríguez-Arancón and Calle-Martínez (2014) as per the reference list. Please check if okay.	
AU7	Please confirm the identified table header for the Tables 2 and 3.	
AU8	Please provide the opening parenthesis?.	